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619 be understood, however, that the present is a very rough-and-ready statement of the case; for there is far more blending and complexity than appears in a bare list of nine tribes. A fuller treatment of the classification of tribes will be given in Chapter X; in the meantime the principal of them are:

1. Binandele and Jeva Buje.
2. Tain-Daware.
3. Aiga.
4. Yega.
5. Sauaha.
6. Sangara.
7. Dirou.
8. Wasida.
9. Hunjara.

Their disposition may be seen on the map.

The native roughly classifies these tribes according to their environment. The River People are called *Umo-ke*, lit. 'water-language'; they comprise the Binandele of the Mambare and Gira rivers and the large branch of the same tribe called Jeva Buje, inhabiting the lower Kumusi. The coastal Tain-Daware and Yega are called *Eno-Embo*, 'Salt-water Men', and the inland tribes are collectively known as *Autembo*, 'Bushmen', or more often as *Perebo* (*Berepo*), a word which has the same general meaning, or more specifically stands for the 'little bush-pigs' that are captured wild in the forest. There are naturally some environmental differences between these large groups, but it appears that such differences are not essential. There seems to be no good ground 619 other than group-conceit for the opinion of an Aiga that the 186 Bush People were *momoseja*, attractive and 'pretty' (the same word would be applied to a brilliant croton leaf), while the River People were *kamoseja*, ugly and unattractive, with black skins like Kiwais, ringworm, and elephantiasis.

619 Apart from certain cultural differences which are prob- 184 ably the direct result of environment, as e.g. in methods of fishing and their appliances, there are others of greater 537 significance which are probably due to some contact influ- 536 ence. The most important of these consists in the religious and social ceremonies involving the use of the bull-roarer and the sacred flute. These objects are known in the southern part of the Division, but their use is discontinued with some abruptness when we reach the Aiga, the Binan-

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dele, and the Tain-Daware. They then reappear on the river Waria, to the north of the last-mentioned tribes. Their distribution excludes in the main that of the small dramas for which the Orokaiva are famous, these latter belonging especially to the Aiga, Binandele, and Tain-Daware.[1] Thus bull-roarer and flute on the one hand, and drama on the other tend to be mutually exclusive. It is noteworthy that the miniature drum, *saunda*, is confined to those three tribes who practice the drama.

Another significant distribution may be mentioned, viz. that of the yam. This vegetable is grown over the whole of the plain, but far less commonly in the north than the south, though it is not, as far as I know, debarred by climatic causes from flourishing in any part. But the yam-house and the extensive cultivation of yams disappear north of Divina Kovari, so that their distribution seems to correspond in some degree with that of the bull-roarer and the sacred flute.

Save for these few distinctions between South and North, the exclusive presence of bull-roarer, flute, and yam in the one, and of the drama and the *saunda* in the other, I have not been able to see any really important distinctions between the various component tribes of the Orokaiva. It may be stated with some confidence that the groundwork of their customs and institutions is the same throughout.

It is on the assumption of general uniformity among the tribes that the present report claims to refer to the people as a whole. The tribe with which I am best acquainted is that of the Aiga, who seemed to offer the best opportunities for research because they are fairly central and as yet less contaminated by European influence than most of the others. Out of a total Orokaiva population of some 9,000, this tribe numbers approximately 1,300, who are scattered in nearly fifty villages on or between the Opi and Kumusi rivers. To avoid confusion it will be the rule of this report to use the Aiga dialectal form for native words.

[1] I am not ready to say that the drama never appears among the Southern tribes. At any rate I cannot speak with any certainty about the Hunjara.

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574 Towards the end of the day comes the formal distribution
431 of food. The master of the feast, conferring anxiously with his friends, has been setting out the taro in heaps, making them correspond by laborious arithmetic with the number of his principal guests. Now that the tally appears satisfactory, he turns, with an enthusiasm bordering on violence, to the distribution. With loud shouts he and his assistants rush back and forth depositing, or often rather hurling down, bunches of taro before the guests, who accept them with a fitting appearance of indifference. In the same way the pig flesh—legs, quarters, chines, and entrails—are bestowed on top of the taro heaps, and the guests are ready to depart. They have been sufficiently regaled throughout the day; the food thus finally distributed is to be carried home.
574 The women pack it into their string bags and prepare to
431 move off. Men and children will bear their part. One
482 remembers the spectacle of a diminutive child bearing away the blood-spattered head of a huge pig, balanced with difficulty and pride upon his own small crown. Thus laden with proofs of friendship the guests depart to await the time when, in a year or so, they will make a similar return of hospitality.

With certain of these festivals there will go the dance and
535 pantomine. The Orokaiva ballet will be described in greater
536 detail in another chapter, but in passing one may claim that its brilliant natural setting, the sudden theatrical entry of the performers into the sunlit village, their paint and feathers and voluminous costumes of dyed palm-leaf, the inspiriting beat of the drum, and above all the swift movements of the dance, full of grace and power, all combine to make a spectacle that one might even call magnificent. The mime comes as a dramatic interlude in the dance, and presents as a theme some legend or incident of village life, enacted with great spirit and humour, and sometimes with considerable taste, upon the most realistic of stages—the village itself, and in the midst of the audience who are on such intimate terms with the actors as occasionally to add an extempore touch of their own to the play.

Such social amusements as these still continue, one is happy to say, to add some zest and interest to native life.

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It is finally wrapped up with some of the fat and entrails and buried. In other cases it is hung up in the garden of the deceased and there left to rot in the sun and rain. This garden has been allowed to fall to rack and ruin since his death: none of its products have been eaten, though the young taro shoots may be transplanted to a new plot. In the Wasida dialect the word *kisa* was applied to such a garden. It appears that in this case the neglect of the garden was less a self-denying tabu than due to an actual fear of evil consequences—such as sore eyes, tooth decay, skinniness—if its products were eaten. And it is noteworthy that such effects would be felt only by the immediate relatives of the dead. It was possible, in fact, to make an exchange of gardens, so that the bereaved relatives would not be left without resources, the *kisa* garden being passed over to one who would take no harm from it, and another being given in exchange to the relatives of the dead. The evil potency of the *kisa* garden is apparently attributed to the malignant spirits of the dead—an explanation for which I have the direct testimony of one informant, although in many other cases it remained inexplicit. It is in keeping with the belief (which is a basis for a system of divination, cf. p. 281) that the dead revisit or haunt their gardens, and in general with the fear which the Orokaiva feels for his deceased relatives *qua sovai*. Among the various mourning tabus which have come to my notice, however, this, viz. the forbidding of the garden to the relatives of the deceased, was the only instance in which the motive was apparently one of fear. All the others were rather manifestations of sorrow.

The Naterari, or Tabu Post

The fourth major mortuary ceremony is a dance, which among the Aiga and Binandele is accompanied by a dramatic performance. The fifth is the ritual disposal of certain materials used in the fourth ceremony. Now I do not believe that the dance and drama are purely and wholly a mortuary ceremony, but that they are at least partly so appears from the facts that the dead are called upon to witness the proceedings, and that, when the proceedings are over, certain

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765 paraphernalia connected with the dead are ceremonially and
535 finally disposed of. On the other hand, the dance and drama
536 have their own intrinsic value as forms of art and amuse-
ment, and, furthermore, they commonly occur in connexion with the initiation and seclusion of a number of youths and girls.

765 The whole subject of dance and drama, however, will be
784 discussed in the next chapter. In the meantime I shall deal
778 with the tabu upon the food-supply which precedes the fourth stage, and which makes possible the large feast which is perhaps the most important feature of the proceedings in so far as they are of a mourning nature. The mark of this tabu is the *naterari* or tabu post, which has already been referred to in Chapter VIII, p. 117. As we saw there, it usually takes the form of a rough-hewn pillar or post, standing a few feet high in the open space of the village. Properly speaking it is made of the *beratu* wood of the clan; but when the *beratu* is not of a suitably solid nature the *naterari* may consist merely of a piece of light timber called *pamba* tied to the butt of a palm, or perhaps to a croton bush. *Na* means 'village', and *terari* 'to close up', as a creek is dammed up with stones, or as the hollow drum is closed at one end with the lizard skin. The Binandele word is *ao*, apparently a contraction of *ago* (another dialectal form): I cannot make any suggestion as to its real meaning. In Wasida the same object is called *itembari*, probably a compound of *i*, 'tree', and *tembari*, 'to place on top'. In Doboduru the word was *natembabije*: *na*, 'village', *temba*, 'to place on top', *abije*, 'ancestor'.

Some months after the man's death the *naterari* is set up in the centre of the village, and from this moment the coconuts are not eaten green but allowed to ripen and fall, until at last there is a tremendous accumulation, perhaps laid out in lines on the ground or else piled on a mountainous tripod. Meanwhile the *naterari* has been standing in the village clearing as if silently watching the slow preparations, somewhat weatherbeaten by now, and with its originally garish make-up a little faded. It is, however, treated with a certain amount of care and respect. It is not uncommon to see a

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(ii) The morning of the festival sees all the guests assembled. The performers are decorating themselves in the bush.

(iii) The ballet makes its appearance at some moment during the afternoon.

(iv) After dancing some ten minutes or more the ballet goes off and brings back the movable stage properties.

(v) While they resume the dance the actors, *buvivi* and *bivei*, make their entry and proceed with the play. This being concluded, they dance off and disappear in the bush.

(vi) The ballet proceeds for a while with the main dance, and then breaks off into a series of minor 'nature' dances.

The performance of the dance and drama may be said to end here. The paraphernalia of the play, however, are brought together, and finally disposed of in a ceremonial manner, but this may be a matter of months afterwards. I shall now proceed to deal with the Orokaiva dance in detail, giving an account—confessedly slight—of its technique.

The Dance

The general name for 'dance' is *java* (Binandele *ya*). As far as I have ascertained there are five main kinds practised by the Orokaiva, viz. (1) *Kuru*, (2) *Paruka*, (3) *Arijo* or *Saunda*, (4) *Puga*, and (5) *Si*. Only the first two are accompanied by song, and only the last three are accompanied by the drama.[1] The first, *kuru*, is without any definite formation save that of a group of men and boys clustered about several drummers. They dance slowly in one direction and then back over the same ground, singing meanwhile. Their movements are quite unpretentious, and might be described as rhythmical shuffling. In all the other dances the performers are in pairs one behind the other, forming double file. Each kind has its appropriate drums and rhythm, the drums being carried by the dancers themselves.

[1] The drama is not an invariable accompaniment of *Arija*, for I have seen a performance of this dance without it. I cannot speak with certainty of *Puga* or *Si*, though I am given to understand that they are always associated with a dramatic performance.

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made of cane and bark-cloth, which were virtually masks; and Mr. C. H. Karius informs me that he has seen on the river Waria what we should definitely call masked dancers, whose mask was once more of the same conical shape.

These particulars—the secrecy, the virtual disguise, also perhaps the use of palm-leaf skirts and mantles, and certainly the conical head-gear—all remind one of the masked dances of the Western Papuan, and in particular of the typical conical mask of the '*kaiva kuku*'. I would, therefore, put forward the very tentative suggestion that in the ceremonial dances of the Orokaiva we have a faint replica of the masked dance of the west. If this were so we should have a fair case for viewing the dance as a mortuary ceremony in which the dancers originally represented the spirits of the dead. For the present, however, this may be laid aside as no more than a conjecture.

The Drama: Stage Accessories

We may now turn our attention to the drama which always appears as a well-defined episode, and thus admits of separate treatment. I have used the word 'drama', despite its pretentious sound, because it is really the most non-committal; though 'mime' or 'farce' might have been more descriptive. As dialogue is almost completely absent, the expression 'dumb-show' would have been perhaps the most accurate of all. It is very difficult to discover a native word for the drama as abstracted from the remainder of the performance, i.e. the dance. The most satisfactory is *sesena* (Binandele *tetenya*) which means simply 'play', or 'play about'. Sometimes it is called *sowai-sesena*, 'the game played by the *sowai*'. Another word, of which I do not know the literal meaning, is *tebua*; and yet another—*yawtu*. It will be remembered that the play is proceeded or ushered in by the ballet. When the dance has been in progress for some ten minutes or more, the dancers suddenly leave in a body, retire into the bush near by, and reappear bearing the movable stage properties. These naturally vary according to the subject of the drama: they may, e.g., consist of a garden platform on which one of the actors is to sit, or a sago-log

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536 (represented by a stalk of a banana plant), or the ladder from the ground to the elevated hiding-place in which some of the actors are already placed. This stage-moving is done with rather remarkable expedition, and the dancers contrive to keep the stage furniture hidden from the spectators' view. This attempt at secrecy is rather noteworthy. Women spectators, for instance, may seize their mats and rush forward to help in concealing the stage properties as they are brought on, already well enough concealed as they are by the throng of stage-movers.

Very often some kind of fixture has already been erected in the village. This usually takes the form of an elevated place of concealment, and may consist of a hollow tree-trunk set on end. Sometimes the branches of a growing tree are lopped off short, and the tree is felled and set up in the village during the night. Upon the base formed by the spreading branches is built a closed superstructure, and in this retreat one or more of the actors must take their places before dawn and remain cramped and uncomfortable until they receive their cue in the afternoon.

When the dancers have set up the stage furniture to their satisfaction, they fall into their places before it and resume their dance. Now everything is in readiness for the appearance of the actors.

A Typical Drama Described

As a composite description is hardly possible I propose to give a fairly full account of one Orokaiva drama as I saw it, together with a brief abstract of several others. This method should suffice to give a fair idea of the drama as a whole.

The example chosen for description has this to recommend it, that having been performed at a 'Christmas' on a Government station it is devoid of obscenity. This does not mean that the performance is other than typical, because obscenity, although very common, is certainly not invariable or essential in the native drama. This has been selected from among the five examples which I have personally witnessed merely because it is, for the reason suggested, more easy to

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describe. It was performed at Christmas, 1923, on the Buna Bay station, by a party of Jeva Buje natives from the Kumusi.

The play is based upon the following legend or legendary incident, which was recounted to me shortly after by some of the players themselves:

A large *Boru* tree had fallen into the river (informants suggested the river Waria), and in the dark pool beneath this tree there sheltered a *dera*, or sword-fish. Now two girls came down the river fishing with a line, the younger taking charge of the fish as the elder caught them. When they came to the *Boru* tree and cast their line into the dark pool beneath it, the bait was seized by the *dera*. The united efforts of the girls failed to land so large a creature, and the line ran hot through their hands.[1] So they made it fast to a tree-trunk, and ran back to the village for help. On the way they were met by two youths who had followed them with the express intention of *kigi*, i.e. clandestine courtship. But the girls are too excited to dally with these young men. They tell them to wait till they call their father from the village, when all will go down to the river together and kill the *dera*. This all happens as they desire. The *dera* is dragged from the water, tied to a pole, and carried to the village where (to give a good ending to the story) it is cut up and eaten.

This simple and somewhat pointless story forms the plot of the drama which I now proceed to describe.

The scene of the performance was the parade ground, towards one end of which there had been set up during the night a small, roughly constructed shelter of palm leaves, about four feet high and six feet square, and with one side (that facing down the parade ground) left open; this shelter represented the *Boru* tree hanging over the water.

On the sea beach, perhaps a hundred yards away, and thus quite out of sight of the spectators, there was another piece of stage furniture. Under the shelter of a canoe, and completely covered with mats, lay a representation of a

[1] The only Orokaiva methods of line fishing of which I know (see p. 57) seem hardly in keeping with the details of this story. It has probably derived something from modern methods.

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536 sword-fish (*dera*). This, which was made of wood, measured eleven feet. The body of the structure consisted of a hollow tree-trunk split down the middle, but various boards had been affixed for fins, and at front and rear there were features to represent the monster's 'sword' and his long tail. The model had been used on a previous performance,[1] and had evidently been well finished and decorated, though it was now somewhat out of repair. (During the performance it sustained further damage, but was kept nevertheless, possibly to be used on a future occasion.) Underneath, or rather within, this wooden model, which may be referred to as *dera*, the sword-fish, there lay a man whose business it would presently be to supply the fish with motive power and intelligence. I do not know low long he had lain in this hot and cramped position, but he was evidently bearing the discomfort quite cheerfully. It is worth noting that informants showed some reluctance in allowing me to see the *dera* and what it contained before the proper moment for its appearance.

The dancers and actors had meanwhile been attiring themselves in some place apart. In the present case I believe it was the police barracks, though in the usual village performance the 'green room' is merely a convenient spot in the surrounding bush. When their preparations, which occupy several hours, are complete, it is time for the performance to begin.

536 535 It is part of Orokaiva stage art, and quite in keeping with the affectation of secrecy which surrounds the dance, that the ballet should make its appearance upon the 'stage' from some unexpected quarter. Thus they do not enter a village by the usual pathway, but after a toilsome detour they make a spectacular incursion from the bush or the concealment of the long grass. They announce their arrival by a thunderous tattoo (*kuku*) on the drums, and one turns to see the column of befeathered dancers stooping or crouching at the edge of the clearing. The drums suddenly break into the

[1] It may be noted that the most valuable stage properties, i.e. those which have been very carefully made, are sometimes spared in the formal destruction. I have seen two well-made puppets kept apparently as mementoes of dramatic performances, or perhaps to serve in a re-enactment.

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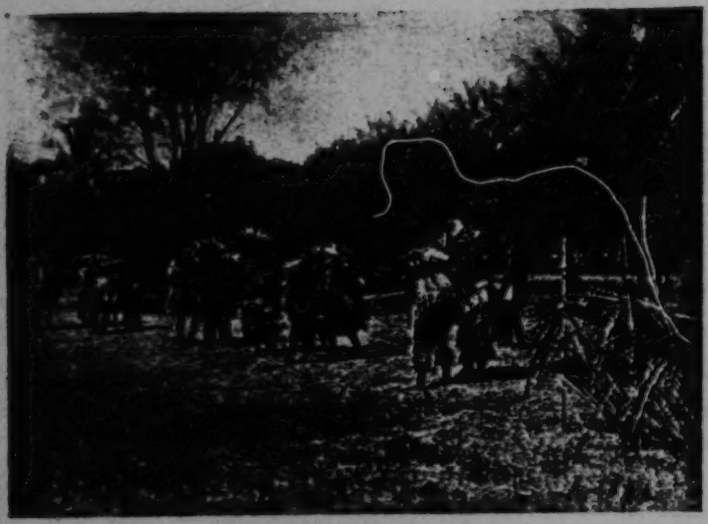

(*a*) The Ballet

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(*b*) Bringing on the *Dera*

THE DRAMA *DERA*

PLATE XXXII [facing p. 242]

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536 rhythm of the dance, and the leading couple (*boboru*, the
535 'head') spring upright and come dancing into the open. Only a dozen or so paces and they dance back again, to be accompanied next time by the second pair (*tunga*, the 'neck'). Now the two couples dance back once more, and on the third advance are followed by the whole body of dancers, who, performing the ordinary evolutions meanwhile, move across the open and take up their position (which, in this instance, is opposite the shelter of palm leaves at one end of the parade ground). Here they continue the dance for some ten minutes or longer. I can give no more detailed account of this dance (which was of the kind called *Puga*) than has been given already in the general description, pp. 233 ff.

It is usual for the ballet to leave the 'stage' at the conclusion of this initial dance in order to bring on the paraphernalia, but on this occasion they were still performing when six men appeared carrying the *dera*. The ballet now dances forward to meet them, breaks up and surrounds the party so that the *dera* (which is covered with blankets) can hardly be seen. As this drama is being specially performed for the magisterial 'Christmas', it is not surprising that several rather officious village constables, carrying their books, should accompany the bearers and issue a multitude of instructions. These, however, though well-intentioned are quite unnecessary. The *dera*, which still contains the man whom we may call its manipulator, is carried to the shelter and placed underneath it, the blankets are removed, and the bearers and dancers withdraw, the latter to renew their dance. They are now, as previously, formed up before the open side of the shelter, and at a distance of perhaps fifteen paces from it.

536 The performance goes on for a moment or two when the attention of the spectators suddenly turns to two 'girls' who come dancing and leaping very gracefully through the coconut palms toward the parade ground, one following the other. These are, of course, the two sisters, who are impersonated by male actors called *kuvivi*. Each carries the women's quarterstaff completely bound with red material,

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536 and the elder of the two has under her arm a fish-line with shell rattles attached to the end. When they have made an almost complete circuit of the ground the elder girl unwinds her fish-line and continually casts and draws it in as she dances. By now they are approaching the shelter where the *dera* is concealed, and the girl casts her line into it. This time she draws it in with a small wooden fish attached. The man underneath the *dera* has seized it and affixed one of a bundle which he carries. Three or four times the girl tries her luck under the shelter, and as often succeeds in catching a fish, which she unhooks and throws to her younger sister. But now she tries again, and this time it appears that she has hooked the *dera* or sword-fish himself. The girl attempts to draw in, but the *dera*, who still remains concealed, holds the line fast. The younger girl comes to the assistance of her sister, and together they pull without avail, until suddenly the *dera* comes scrambling a little distance out of his concealment. The girls are alarmed, but they drive a stake into the ground, secure their line to it, and dance off the stage as gracefully as they came on to it.

In a moment they reappear accompanied by two gaily bedecked youths. These are two more *buivi*, the girls' lovers, who had followed them down the track. At some distance behind them comes a grotesque and hideous figure who represents the girls' father. He is an actor of another kind, called *sanuma*, 'the bad one', or *sowai* (Binandele *binei*), 'the spirit of the dead, the devil-devil'. Staggering and lurching as he approaches he continually brandishes his mock spear of light *pawba* wood. He wears a ragged singlet and torn trousers, and his face is almost covered by two halved coco-nut shells, worn goggle-fashion.[1] Drawing near the spectators he makes darts and sallies, scattering them right and left. He hurls his light spear at any one within his

[1] It appears that the *sanuma* (*binei*, *sowai*, or 'clown') sometimes wears European trousers nowadays; merely, I think, because they are in themselves ugly garments, and as foreign as one could conceive to the usual garb of the native. A missionary who saw a *sanuma* attired in this fashion, and wearing the coco-nut shell goggles, told me he thought the man was 'taking off' the Europeans, and adding a commendable touch by imitating his spectacles. I think, however, he was mistaken. The coco-nut goggles (called *kisi sowai*) are quite usual: they are one of the conventional means of making the *sanuma* look hideous or absurd, and probably the trousers were meant to serve the same purpose. For the usual costume of the *sanuma* see p. 251.

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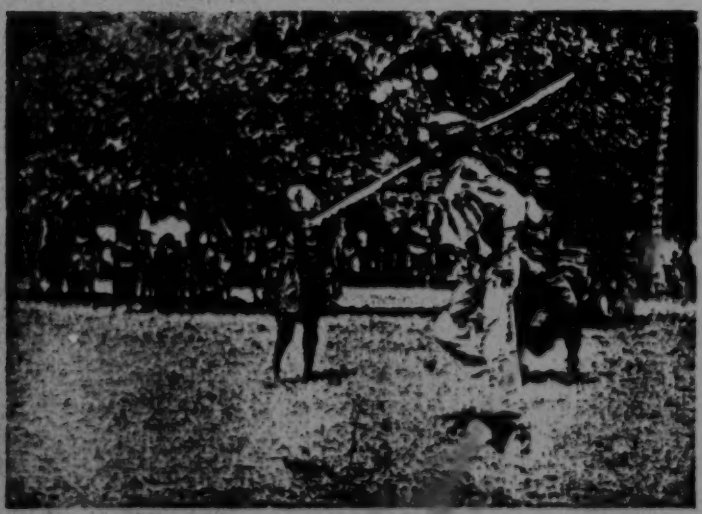
(*a*) The Girls fishing



(*b*) The *Sam*

THE DRAMA *DERA* [Facing p. 244]

PLATE XXXIII

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536 reach—not sparing the small party of white spectators—and follows with prodigious bounds to recover it. For a while the fun is running high, and the *samuna* is frankly concerned with his own antics rather than the action of the play.

At last he turns to where the four *buvivi* have surrounded the *dera* in their efforts to capture it. The monster rushes forth again and again while the youths and maidens dance lightly around. But now at last the *samuna* has directed his attention to the work in hand. He lunges at the *dera* with his spear and after a few more capers succeeds in striking it dead. The wooden model has suffered more or less serious damage during the play, and it is necessary for the actors to mend it or bind it about with withes. This they do very expeditiously, and, the manipulator of the *dera* having scrambled out of it, the two *buvivi* youths shoulder the wooden shell and go prancing off through the coco-nuts. Behind them follow the two girls, and the *samuna* still hurling his spear about brings up the rear.

The Plot of the Drama

The drama which I have just described is evidently founded upon one of the innumerable Orokaiva legends, if, indeed, one is justified in applying the word legend to such an artless tale. These legends, or *bibi*, no doubt furnish the plots of many dramas (see, e.g., No. 1, p. 247), but more frequently, it would appear, the theme of the play is even simpler, consisting of some trivial incident of village life. Almost invariably this incident is one of comedy, so that the drama may be little more than the re-enactment of a standing joke. The following is an example. A woman of Poho, named Anyanya, was fishing in a creek, and had left her baby son, Banari, sitting on the bank. Seeing some reflection that pleased him in the water, the child bent over, tumbled in, and was nearly drowned. The mother, however, recovered him in time and, terrified and weeping, held him up by the legs, while the water ran out of his mouth. Another woman, Kombera, heard the uproar and ran to the village to call the child's father, Saunda, and the latter's

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536 brother, Evai. They all rush to the creek and rejoice to find that the mother has brought the baby round.

This incident, which must have happened some eighteen years ago (for Barari the baby is now a plantation boy), obviously held some farcical possibilities, and within the last few years was made the subject of a play by Evai, who is now the principal man of Poho. The mother and father of the child are dead, but the others survive. In the drama the parts of the above-named men and women were taken by four actors, and that of the baby by a wooden puppet.

536 522 I give another example which may be regarded as more typical. It was enacted at Deunia on the Kumusi, where I had the good fortune to see it. Many years ago when Kove, the present village constable of Deunia, was a little boy, he was sent one day to the gardens to gather wood. Approaching a sago-place he heard the sound of a man at work and paused a moment at the edge of the clearing, where he witnessed an occurrence which eventually became the theme of a play. Bigaba, a man of Deunia, was at work scraping the sago log, while his wife, Warari, seemed to be pestering him with amorous advances. At first Bigaba roughly rejected them, but gradually his manner changed, and finally Kove observed the couple in the act of sexual intercourse. All this he told of in the village, and it became a standing joke of which Bigaba and his wife were probably not unaware.

It was probably fifteen or twenty years after that the drama which I witnessed was played. The part of Bigaba was taken by Kove himself, who was a particularly clever buffoon, and hugely amusing to the spectators; that of the woman Warari by a young man; and that of Kove by a little boy, who played the part of Peeping Tom, with a bundle of sticks balanced on his head, as Kove carried a bundle of firewood fifteen years before. The oddest feature of all is that both Bigaba and his wife, now old people, witnessed the performance. It was by chance rather than intent, I fancy, that as Kove (in the character of Bigaba) went dancing off at the close of the drama, he encountered the real Bigaba face to face, almost indeed colliding with him.

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Bigaba, who, whatever his feelings, wore an imperturbable countenance, stepped aside, but Kove met the situation by swinging a terrific blow at him with the long digging-stick he was carrying. The pole missed the old man's head by inches and met the ground with such force as to be shattered to pieces. After this improvisation, which earned him a parting roar of laughter, the clown went off, alternately shambling and bounding, to change his costume in the bush.

The following brief abstracts will help to give a general idea of the drama. I have actually seen only Nos. 7 and 8; the others were described to me.[1] It may be noted that there are two kinds of actors, the *buvivi*, whose parts are attractive, and the *samuna*, whose parts are at once comical and ugly.

No. 1. 'Totoima.'

Totoima was a man-monster who, in the early days, used to slaughter the Orokaiva. He was armed with tusks which, at the end of his day's work of killing, he would take out and sharpen. He was invincible until one day two youths secured these tusks which he had left aside while he bathed in the river. The youths had previously prepared a pig-trap, *bage* (see p. 48), and now pursued by Totoima, who is anxious to regain his teeth, they lead him on to the *bage* and throw them into it. Totoima blunders in after them and is caught. In the drama a pig-trap is erected in the village. Totoima (*samuna*) appears holding in his mouth the common two-tusk ornament (see p. 39). The boys obtain this from him and after a long pursuit throw it into the pig-trap, which collapses upon Totoima as soon as he enters it.

No. 2. 'Orehaha and the Drum.'

The Orokaiva did not know of the drum and *hui* (see pp. 86, 88) until they obtained them from Orehaha, the carpet snake. Orehaha used to beat the drum and blow the *hui* and, when the people came to discover the cause of the noise, would retire out of sight. This went on until they set a small boy to spy. He revealed the whereabouts of Orohaha,

[1] Another thoroughly typical example will be found in *Annual Report*, 1914–15, p. 14.

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536 whom the villagers came and killed, thus obtaining the
173 drum and *bui*. I have not the particulars of stage appointments, &c.

No. 3. 'The Snake in the Ants' Nest.'

A snake-man lived in an ants' nest (*siribo*) on a tree which leaned over a creek. A man and two girls come to bale out the water in order to fish, and as they work the snake puts out his head (made of cane and bark-cloth), and sways back and forth above them. Suddenly the man looks up and takes to his heels in a fright, shouting to the girls to follow. But the snake puts aside his skin and becomes a fine man. He overtakes the girls, and leads them into his *siribo* house.

No. 4. 'Cuscus Hunting.'

536 A woman goes to the garden accompanied by her dog. They come to a tree with a hole in it, at which the dog whines and scratches. Introducing a stick into the hole the woman prods, and from the noises which ensue concludes that she has found a cuscus. Now she goes to bring her husband, who appears as a *samuna*. The woman recommends obtaining further help, but the husband declares he is strong enough, and prods again and again. Finally a second *samuna* appears, who quarrels and fights with the first. Young men and maidens (*buvivi*) come from the village, but the cuscus is not caught until the dog finally drags him out by the tail. Then there is a pursuit, and it is finally killed by the *samuna*.

The parts of the dog and the cuscus are taken by small boys blackened with charcoal.

No. 5. 'The Girl in the Tree.'

A girl (*buvivi*) is found in a tree by a youth (*buvivi*). He brings his friends (*buvivi*) and one of them climbs the tree and brings the girl down. Now all desire to possess her, and there is a scuffle in which a *samuna*, who has appeared in the meantime, joins heartily, finding ample scope for his favourite methods. It appears that the drama ends when one of the *buvivi* secures the girl and the *samuna* is left lamenting.

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No. 6.

A youth had visited the Mission at —— in order to pay addresses to one of the Mission girls. He was waiting in a tree by the track at a point some distance from the Mission where he hoped she would keep her assignation. It appears that in this he was disappointed, but while he waited he saw a man (of a village near his own) returning with his wife from the Mission, where they had been to make some purchases. Directly under his tree they stopped and had sexual intercourse. The youth did not reveal his presence but afterwards, of course, made the tale public in his village, where it subsequently became the theme of a thoroughly typical drama. This is a good example of the dramatization of a local incident.

No. 7. 'Roasting the Corn.'

A man and his wife (both *samuna*) go to the garden to plant taro. He works very energetically and scolds her for her laziness. She works with him for a time, and then, building a fire near the garden platform, proceeds to roast corn for a midday meal. Having finished his work the husband returns to the platform, and climbs on to it groaning with fatigue. From here he watches his wife, and his frame of mind changes. When she brings him the roasted corn he makes amorous advances to her, which, however, she rejects. He then turns his back on her in a huff, and refuses to eat her corn. At last she yields to him, and they have sexual intercourse on the platform. At this point a youth and a girl (*buvivi*) come into the garden, and dance round and round the platform. Suddenly the man, finding himself observed, leaves his wife on the platform, and scrambles underneath it to hide. After a few moments she also becomes aware of the spectators, and follows his example. The *buvivi* now dance away, followed by the disgraced husband and wife.

No. 8.

An old couple (both *samuna*) have been at work in the gardens. The wife returns first, feeling indisposed, and lies

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536 groaning on a mat by her house. A lover (*huvivi*) appears, arouses the old woman, and endeavours to have sexual intercourse with her. He is disturbed by a whistle, and dances about the village trying to discover whence it has come. In the meantime the husband returns from the garden carrying wood and vegetables as a woman does, for he is doing his wife's work. He throws these down and, in the usual fashion of the Orokaiva drama, begins to make advances to her. But he now finds evidence that she has been visited by another in his absence, and there is an angry scene. Meanwhile the lover has discovered that the whistle was made by a boy and girl in the woman's house. These two (*huvivi*) thereupon come dancing down, and all the actors leave the stage.

There was some confusion as to the interpretation of this plot. The most sensible version I heard was that the two children were son and daughter of the old woman, and that they had whistled in order to prevent the lover from interfering with their mother.

The foregoing examples will show that the theme of the play may be furnished by some domestic incident as well as by one of the accredited *hibi* or legends; and, indeed, the former is more usually the case.[1] Any episode that provides sufficient scope for farce and indecency may be turned into a play.

Actors, Stage, and Audience

It will be readily imagined that there is no playwright, unless one can give that name to the man who suggests the theme for the play. It would appear that the selection of a plot devolves upon the individual who institutes the feast and the accompanying dance and drama. But his ear is open to suggestions. Thus we find a man of Papaki who goes first to Totemburari, then to Ohoraburari, and finally to Poho for a plot, and in the last village accepts the *hibi* of Orehaha (No. 2, p. 247). Another (No. 8, p. 249), per-

[1] I find that Beaver made the same twofold division of the subjects of the drama: 'The Yavetu may be broadly divided into two classes—(*a*) myths or legends, (*b*) märchen, in which may be included imitations of local or village incidents and farce.' Quoted by Sir J. H. P. Murray, *Annual Report*, 1914–15, p. 14.

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formed at Petakiari on the Opi, actually came from a plantation near Samarai in the Eastern Division, where the story was told one night in the labourers' sleeping quarters. 536

If there are no playwrights there are, nevertheless, those whom we might call actors. Certain men become celebrated for a gift of buffoonery. They are called *ate-buso*, i.e. expert in *ate*, or the art of demonstration, or *sovai-buso*, i.e. expert in representing the *sovai*. Such men are much in request, and I have been surprised to note—though this may not be invariable—that the man who takes the *samuna's* part, viz. that of the *binei* or *sovai*, is usually one of years, character, and some importance. It is not a part for the village idiot. The *buvivi*, who play prettier but less important parts, are usually young men of good appearance. There are no actresses on the Orokaiva stage: all female parts, whether of *samuna* or *buvivi*, are played by men.

The acting consists almost invariably of dumb show; and dialogue, where it does occur, is no more than elementary. In only one of the dramas I saw myself did any of the actors open his mouth to utter more than an inarticulate cry; though it is true that in this instance (No. 7, p. 249) the two *samuna*, husband and wife, kept the audience amused by shouted interchanges. As a rule, however, the *samuna* relies on exaggerated gestures and silent caricature.

The conventional costume of the *samuna* is made of *pipiga*, an extremely rough and ragged kind of bark-cloth, and it covers him like a hooded cloak. By immersion in swamp mud it is dyed to an evil grey-black, and where it leaves his limbs exposed the actor may apply charcoal. Over his eyes he wears a pair of half coco-nut shells, like huge goggles, which are pierced so that he may see through them. These great eyes are called *kiti monjo*. His make-up is rendered more terrible or absurd by such things as boars' tusks for teeth and fringes of cassowary feathers for whiskers. A red *bega* fruit represents a sore between his buttocks, and if he is a male he wears very ostentatiously an imitation penis. Altogether his aim is to make himself hideous enough for a real *binei* of the bush, and to behave obscenely and comically enough to make his audience laugh. 536 292

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536 The paraphernalia of the stage have already been described, but I may draw attention in passing to the disguises or devices for representing animals, &c. Babies were evidently represented by puppets. I have been told that the parts of dogs and cuscus were taken by small boys blackened with charcoal. A snake, or the head of a snake, was made of cane and bark-cloth. We have already seen that players could go to considerable trouble to make a wooden model of a sword-fish, but there is in the Papuan Collection a representation of a crocodile which is a far more finished piece of work. It is almost nine feet in length with gaping jaws. Its back is studded with small pyramidal prominences which give a very fair idea of the creature's rough skin, and the whole is skilfully hewn from one piece of wood. This model was acquired by Mr. C. F. Jackson at a dance on the Mambare. Mr. L. P. Armit informs me that in the same district he saw a representation of a flying-fox which stood three or four feet high and had reticulated wings which were made to flap during the dance.

The action of the play goes forward in the open space of the village. There is nothing in the nature of a stage or a closed arena, and if I have used the former of these two words in the course of the present chapter it is only metaphorically. Nor is there any accommodation for the spectators. It is true that booths are erected for the visitors, but these are meant for shelter during the heat of the day, not for grand-stands during the performance of the drama. The spectators in fact cluster round the actors, and though sometimes they do not display as keen and silent an interest in the play as one would expect, their interest is, nevertheless, curiously sympathetic. When, e.g., the stage furniture is brought on by the ballet, some of the spectators will lend a hand to set it up. When the *binei* breaks his mock spear, a spectator runs to supply him with another. Or you may see a bystander offer his bamboo pipe to one of the players, or spread a mat for the old woman when she is about to lie down, or bring a fire-stick when she wishes to light the fire. The actors, in fine, present their play not before the spectators, but among them. It may be worth remarking,

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incidentally, that the audience does not always thoroughly understand the action. I have been surprised at the diversity of interpretations placed upon one drama by different members of the audience. The plot was not divulged previously, and when the play had been performed those whom I questioned as to its story or meaning seemed somewhat mystified and, be it confessed, somewhat indifferent.

Disposal of Paraphernalia

Before attempting a general appreciation of the drama and the dance there still remains the last episode to describe, viz. the final disposal of the paraphernalia. This has been spoken of before as the last of the mortuary ceremonies (*vide* p. 224), and it usually follows the dance and drama, which constitute the penultimate ceremony, by a space of one or more months. A brief description of this rite will help us to understand the ceremonial significance of much that has been described in this chapter. Some time after the performance of a dance and play in the village of Horanada I received an invitation to witness the rite called *sirari*, lit. 'pushing away'. The *pipiga* costume of the *samuna*, his imitation spears, and his wooden phallus had been kept since the day of the drama. They were now placed on a raft with some cooked taro and pig, and a little boy (son of the deceased man for whom the dance and drama had been made) waded out pushing it before him into the current and there let it go. I was told that the *sovai* of the deceased, for whom the dance and drama had been celebrated, travelled on this raft.

On another occasion, which I did not witness, it appears that even the timbers of the men's house and all the *ando*, or costumes, of the dancers were put on rafts and sent down the river, the chief man crying out the names of the deceased for whom the dance had been held, and bidding them begone from the neighbourhood of the village. And obediently, I was informed, the *sovai* would go aboard the raft and drift down to the sea. It can hardly be doubted that there is some connexion between the paraphernalia of the dance and drama and the spirits of the dead for whom these ceremonies were performed.

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Ceremonial Significance of Dance and Drama

535 536 It remains now to attempt an appreciation of the dance and drama in respect of their functions and value, to connect them with what has been described in the previous chapters, and to place them correctly in the life of the community.

The combined dance and drama of the Orokaiva have, I believe, less real value as ceremonial than as art or play. However, we may for a moment ignore this latter and more important aspect, and consider what meaning—latent or otherwise—they may possess as ritual.

535 536 765 In the last chapter I implied that the dance and drama constituted a mortuary rite. Earlier it was suggested that they were in some degree or in some instances an initiatory rite, taking the place among the Aiga and Binandele of the *embahu* ceremony among the southern tribes. It seems probable that the set performance, combining dance and drama, sometimes fulfils both these functions together.

We have seen that the occasion of it brings to an end the tabu on the village coco-nuts, which was instituted expressly because of the death of a villager. The *naterari*, or tabu post, may be presented with offerings of food at the feast which accompanies the dance and drama, and it is made clear that these offerings are to the dead whom the *naterari* apparently represents. Before the dance and feast begin, the *sovai* or *binei* are hailed and bidden to attend, though information has not been entirely consistent on this point, some saying that the words are addressed to the particular individuals for whom the tabu was instituted and the feast is now being made, others that an invitation is offered to the spirits at large. In more than one straightforward instance, however, it appeared that the ceremony was definitely performed for one deceased individual; and in one of these instances it was affirmed that when the dancers began, the *sovai* of the deceased would 'get up and dance with them'. Again, while the ballet is going forward, the widows of the village wail and slash their cheeks, being reminded, it is said, of the time when their husbands danced and made merry. Lastly, when the performance is over, the para-

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(*a*) Puppet used in the Drama at Poho

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(*b*) The *Sinuri* Ceremony

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phernalia of the play are stacked together, and so await a last ritual disposal, when the *sovai* of the deceased is bidden farewell. These facts, then, should be enough to show that the dance and drama can be regarded as a mortuary rite.

The actual significance of the rite remains a matter for conjecture. The native informant will say that it is celebrated in honour of the dead, who is called upon to be present and witness it, and to partake of the feast. It is plainly in the nature of a placation, and when it is all over it is hoped that the spirit will take his departure for good.

One is inclined to think, however, that it is the feast rather than the accompanying dance and drama that is the real act of placation. If this be so, what is then the function or significance of the dance and drama? One or two points of evidence have hinted at a possible explanation. An informant once told me that the spirit of the dead man for whom the feast and dance were being held would be present and dance with the dancers. There is again the queer practice of the widows, who, when the dancers appear, may break forth into lamentation and slash their cheeks and foreheads with quartz. They are said to be reminded of their husbands. It is as if in the semi-disguised figures of the dancers they saw their own men-folk returned from the place of the spirits.

The rite called *sirari*, i.e. the ritual disposal of the costumes, &c., of the actors and sometimes of the dancers, is not out of keeping with this idea. What remains of the *samuna* or of the dancer, i.e. his costume and paraphernalia, is put aboard the raft and abandoned, and it is said at the same time that the *sovai* of the deceased travels aboard the raft. It is difficult not to associate the two, almost difficult not to identify them. It might well enough be that the *samuna*, grotesque and foolish as he is, was in some manner impersonating the deceased, and that now the disguise in which he did it is being mentally identified with him.

There is something, moreover, in the secrecy as to the identity of the dancers and in the more or less complete disguise they wear—matters which have been already referred to (*vide* p. 238). These, together with a point of similarity

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in costume, have suggested a possible affinity with the masked dance of the Western and Gulf Papuans, and the suggestion here put forward—be it remembered, in an entirely tentative manner—is that the performers in the Orokaiva dance and drama originally impersonate the spirits of the dead, who foregather to partake of the mortuary feast.

The feast is the real act of placation. It is provided for the spirits, and in order to make the donors of the feast feel more satisfied that it is accepted by them, the spirits are brought on to the scene in the persons of the disguised dancers and actors. It may be repeated that no native ever placed this interpretation on the dance and drama, and that, in the absence of more telling evidence than I have been able to supply, it is intended for nothing more than a conjecture.

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We have next to consider the dance and drama as constituting a rite of initiation. I regret that during the whole of my stay among the Aiga and Binandele there was no opportunity of witnessing an initiation, so I can bring forward only verbal evidence that the *ebamei*, or 'new children', i.e. the initiates, make their appearance together with the dancers, and witness the performance of a play. I have also been told that in some cases the initiate bears a minor part in the play, viz. that of a *buvivi*. At any rate, however, it may be regarded as certain that the dance and drama form part of the cycle of puberty ceremonies among the Aiga and Binandele.

The question is whether they constitute the essence of the ceremony, i.e. whether they correspond to the meeting with the *embabi*, which is the essence of initiation among the southern Orokaiva. Here again it may be remembered that no native has ever spoken of the two rites as corresponding, and the suggestion that the dance and drama have some initiatory significance is my own. It is based upon the following facts: (1) The dance and drama always form part of the puberty cycle. (2) In the dance the performers are virtually disguised by their costumes, and their identity is meant to remain secret, just as it is with the *embabi*, who are supposedly irrecognizable to the initiates. (Further, as I have just indicated, one is tempted to conjecture that the

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disguised dancers among the Aiga and Binandele originally represented spirits of the dead.) (3) In the drama we find the same kind of secrecy. The identity of the actors is not revealed, and the plot of the play is not divulged before its performance, nor does any one care to pry into these matters. Furthermore, in the drama there always appears at least one *binei* or *sovai*, i.e. spirit of the dead.

The gist of initiation among the southern Orokaiva is to bring the candidate into contact with the supposed spirits of the dead, and make him acquainted with the bull-roarer and the flutes which are the voices of the spirits; whereas among the Aiga and Binandele, who know neither the bull-roarer nor the flute, the candidate is, nevertheless, brought into contact with the spirits of the dead in the drama and conceivably also in the dance which accompanies the drama.

This interpretation of the ceremony, viz. as a rite of initiation, may be thought unnecessary in view of the other, which gives it a mortuary significance. It will be noted, however, that the two are not incompatible if there be any truth in the theory that the dance and drama bring forth impersonators of the spirits. It may be noted that, since the confinement of a batch of youths and girls is a comparatively rare occurrence, the dance and drama appear usually in their mortuary guise alone.

In fine the combined dance and drama seem to me primarily of a mortuary nature, but this may make them all the more suitable for initiation, an essential idea of which is, apparently, to bring the initiate into contact with the supposed spirits of the dead. For the present, then, I shall set down only this much as a conclusion, viz. that the dance and drama (whatever their real significance) constitute a mortuary rite, and possibly also an initiatory one, and as for their significance it is suggested that the performers in the dance, and at least the main actors in the drama represent spirits of the dead.

Aesthetic and Recreative Value

So far I have spoken of the ceremonial functions of the dance and drama. I now wish to draw attention to their more real, 'live', functions, viz. the aesthetic and recreative.

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535 The dance or ballet is one of swift, swinging, vigorous action. There is no place in it for cramped or stilted movement, and, although all figures are strictly regulated, they never lose a certain dash or impetuosity. At the same time the dancers must be intent on their work, for the figures are not without difficulty, and are only perfected after many rehearsals. But when their dance is in full swing it is obvious that the dancers take great pleasure in the successful performance of a difficult work of art. And this pleasure is, of course, intensified in each by the fact that all are acting in concert. The dance is a fine piece of 'team-work', conducted to a stirring rhythm which the dancers themselves create, for each holds and beats his own drum.

It goes without saying that every performer, brilliantly befeathered and draped with flowing garments of dyed grass, feels a delightful titivation of his self-regarding impulses. The folk-tales dwell upon the personal successes of dancers, and it is well known that young female spectators are sometimes ravished into matrimony.

Altogether it may be claimed that the Orokaiva ballet is a beautiful and valuable creation. No spectator could withhold his admiration for the brilliancy of its colour, for the charm of its figures, and for the grace and vim of its performers, while to the performers themselves it clearly means aesthetic satisfaction, *camaraderie*, and heightened self-esteem. If such a comment may be ventured in this report, I do not know of any more charming and admirable feature of native life than the Orokaiva dance, nor of any that is better worth preserving.

536 The drama, or dramatic interlude in the ballet, is of special interest. It may be that the faculty for dramatic representation is strongly developed in most primitive peoples, but comparatively few at the low cultural level of the Orokaiva have evolved a set form. Whatever may have been its original ritual significance (and I have suggested that it is a mortuary, and perhaps also an initiatory rite), it has practically reached the stage when it is an end in itself. Although seldom, if ever, performed without some ceremonial pretext, it nevertheless possesses an interest which is

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independent of any ceremonial purpose. Often tastefully performed it is definitely an activity which gives scope for the exercise of art and talent.

Its tastefulness, indeed, is very commonly marred by gross obscenity. But here, as in so many other instances, the European, who would appreciate native art, must wink at unpleasant accompaniments. And this broadness will be in some measure excused when we remember that the play is essentially comedy or farce, and the success of a performance is judged by the amount of laughter it causes. I cannot agree with one charge which has been levelled against the Orokaiva drama, viz. that its obscenity serves to arouse the passions of the spectators and prepare them for an orgy of immorality. I have no evidence that any such orgy takes place, and, furthermore, the obscenity of the play is far too gross and comical to have the effect ascribed to it. Some of the actors, those known as *huivi*, play respectable parts, and their manners are as charming and their movements as graceful as native art can make them: the others, known as *samuna*, or 'the bad men', appear in the role of *sovai* or *binei*, and their behaviour and appearance are merely those of an inconceivably ragged circus clown. Both kinds of actors enjoy their own performance. One may be almost amused at the expression of complacence on the face of a dancing *huivi*, and I have watched a *binei* helpless with laughter at his own antics. We have seen also that the audience finds pleasure in the performance and is in remarkable sympathy with the actors. On the whole, therefore, we may agree that the drama, like the dance, is a thing of charm in itself, and a valuable element of native culture. Quite apart from any ceremonial significance it may have, it is valuable as a source of pleasure and amusement, and as an art that is its own reward. Here, if anywhere, we have an instance of a purely native product which deserves to be perpetuated, and which contains seeds of development which are worth the tending.